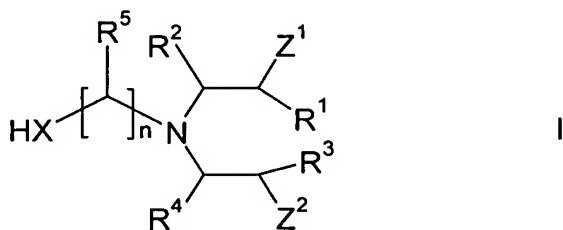


IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing hyperbranched polymers ~~which comprises~~ comprising reacting compounds of the formula I



where

X is sulfur or oxygen,

R¹ and R³ are identical or different and are hydrogen, C₁-C₆ alkyl, C₃-C₁₂ cycloalkyl or C₆-C₁₄ aryl,

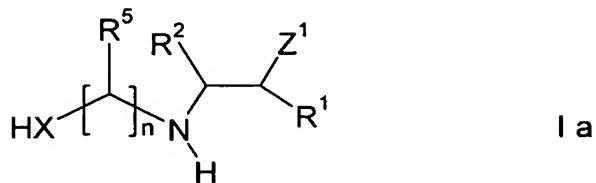
R² and R⁴ are identical or different and are hydrogen, C₁-C₆ alkyl, C₃-C₁₂ cycloalkyl, C₆-C₁₄ aryl,

Z¹ and Z² are identical or different and are COOH or COOR⁶, the radicals R⁶ being identical or different and being C₁-C₆ alkyl, formyl or CO-C₁-C₆ alkyl,

R⁵ identically or differently at each occurrence is C₁-C₆ alkyl or hydrogen, and

n is an integer from 2 to 10,

optionally with at least one compound of the formula I a



where the variables are as defined above,

in the presence of a catalyst.

Claim 2 (Original): The process according to claim 1, wherein R^1 and R^3 in formula I are identical.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein R^2 and R^4 in formula I are identical.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein Z^1 and Z^2 in formula I are each COOH.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein Z^1 and Z^2 in formula I are each COOR⁶.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3 and 5~~ claim 1, wherein the radicals R^6 in formula I are each identical.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein R¹ and R³ in formula I are each identical and are methyl or hydrogen, R² and R⁴ in formula I are each hydrogen, and Z¹ and Z² in formula I are each COOR⁶.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, wherein from 0 to 1 000% by weight of compound of the formula I a are used, based on compound of the formula I.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of at least one polyfunctional compound.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of at least one enzyme.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of an acidic inorganic, organometallic or organic catalyst or a mixture of two or more acidic inorganic, organometallic or organic catalysts.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A hyperbranched polymer ~~obtainable~~ obtained by the process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing hydrophilically modified hyperbranched polymers, ~~which comprises~~ comprising reacting the hyperbranched polymer according to claim 12 with a hydrophilic compound.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A hydrophilically modified hyperbranched polymer ~~obtainable~~ obtained by the process according to claim 13.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing hydrophobically modified hyperbranched polymers, ~~which comprises~~ comprising reacting the hyperbranched polymer according to claim 12 with at least one hydrophobic alcohol.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A hydrophobically modified hyperbranched polymer ~~obtainable~~ obtained by the process according to claim 15.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing hyperbranched polymers modified with at least one ethylenically unsaturated compound, ~~which comprises~~ comprising reacting the hyperbranched polymer according to claim 12 with at least one alcohol or amine which has an ethylenically unsaturated double bond.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A hyperbranched polymer modified with at least one ethylenically unsaturated compound, ~~obtainable~~ obtained by the process according to claim 17.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): ~~The use of the hyperbranched polymer according to claim 12 for~~ A method for producing a formulation wherein said formulation is an adhesive, a coating, a foam, a covering, a printing ink or a varnish, especially a print varnish comprising adding the hyperbranched polymer according to claim 12 to said formulation.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): A printing ink prepared ~~using~~ by utilizing the hyperbranched polymer according to claim 12 in a printing ink formulation.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A print varnish prepared ~~using~~ by utilizing the hyperbranched polymer according to claim 12 ~~or using the hyperbranched polymer modified with at least one ethylenically unsaturated compound according to claim 18~~ in a print varnish formulation.

Claim 22 (New): A print varnish prepared by utilizing the hyperbranched polymer modified with at least one ethylenically unsaturated compound according to claim 17 in a print varnish formulation.